

County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

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May 16, 2007

TO: Each Supervisor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Browning', written over the 'TO:' line.

FROM: Philip L. Browning, Director

**SUBJECT: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: MOTION ON DEVELOPMENT OF
COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM TO IDENTIFY, PROSECUTE AND
PREVENT FOOD STAMP TRAFFICKING IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY
(BOARD ORDER #61-A-DECEMBER 12, 2006)**

This is to provide an update to our initial report to your Board on February 1, 2007 relative to our efforts to develop a comprehensive program to identify, prosecute and prevent food stamp trafficking in Los Angeles County.

DPSS and representatives from the District Attorney (DA) met with state and federal agencies to discuss several options for combating food stamp trafficking in Los Angeles County. While representatives from the United States Department of Agriculture/Office of Inspector General (OIG) acknowledged responsibility for the identification, investigation and prosecution of food stamp trafficking, they did agree to work with DPSS and DA staff to identify ways in which we could work together to curb food stamp trafficking. Several options were identified and the following is an update on the progress on these activities:

- DA staff received training from OIG/Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) staff on critical areas in the investigation of food stamp trafficking.
- DA investigators received some food stamp trafficking referrals from OIG/FNS and are currently conducting investigations.
- Following completion of these investigations, DPSS and the DA will meet to assess funding needs and sources for continued investigation of referrals from the OIG/FNS.
- The WeTip public service announcements and the brochures have been revised to include information on reporting food stamp trafficking.

- DPSS continues to work on the development of a Public Awareness Campaign advising applicants and recipients of the penalties for selling their food stamp benefits and how to report suspected food stamp trafficking by both vendors and recipients.
- DPSS continues to explore the feasibility of implementing an Administrative Disqualification Hearing process in Los Angeles County, to allow a penalty to be imposed on participants when the food stamp loss falls below the DA's minimum loss for prosecution in criminal court.

We will provide your Board with an update in 90 days.

PLB:mh

c: Chief Administrative Officer
District Attorney
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors